



P R E S S R E L E A S E

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ADAPTATIONS TO CDC QUARANTINE GUIDANCE FOR ST. JOSEPH

On December 2, 2020, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released updated guidance related to quarantines for close contacts of COVID-19 patients. This guidance can be found at the following link:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/more/scientific-brief-options-to-reduce-quarantine.html>

The City of St. Joseph Health Department is amending to these updated guidelines in recognition of the needs of our community. This newly-modified CDC guidance is not authorized for reduced timeframes for quarantine in nursing facilities or long-term care facilities. Beginning today, December 4, 2020, the contact tracing staff at the City of St. Joseph Health Department will advise COVID-19 cases to educate their close contacts to quarantine for 14 days if possible. The close contact may end quarantine after ten days if they have had no symptoms during quarantine, resuming regular activity on day 11. A third option will be to test on or after day five but remain in quarantine through day seven, only resuming regular activity on day eight if the test results are negative and the contact has had no symptoms.

Public health interventions are used to protect the health of the community. Quarantine is a tool to reduce the risk of transmission of communicable diseases. The goal of this public health policy is to balance the protective benefits of the act of quarantining with the impact quarantine may have on individuals and families. In addition to quarantine, using strategies such as physical distancing, wearing masks, washing and sanitizing hands and surfaces, staying home when sick with any illness, getting a flu vaccine, and avoiding group gatherings are additional public health tools our community must embrace to combat COVID-19.

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